

HR *Signo 11/8/71*

10/30/71

Dear Gary,

I tried to phone you last night. Later developments persuaded me not to. I write this not intending to send it until after you have heard from Ned and I have heard from him or both of you, for I would not prejudice you. However, I have reached certain decisions and to the degree what I seek to do will permit it, I will also seek to abide by them.

I ask that this be in strictest confidence. I am sending nobody ~~any~~ ^a carbon~~s~~

Last night Howard called with apparently perturbed by Ned's call to him. Ned had also looked Jerry up in New York and appears to have learned how to reach Howard through him. He had asked me for Howard's Specter interview. I could not give it to him because Howard gave it to me in confidence, even though it is I who prepared him for it, on tape, when he was here. Ned and I both forgot, so he left here without Howard's address. He could, of course, have learned it by phoning me with much less trouble than Howard, who is in a university of Pa. dorm with no phone of his own.

Because I was already upset enough, there may be some details on which I am not clear. But of the essence there is no doubt. Howard either told him he would not let him have his Specter interview or told him that he would let him know so he could think it over but he told me he has no intention of letting Ned have it. Ned also asked Howard for his book so he could use it to evaluate my work on the medical evidence. Howard told me he was shocked at this and refused it outright. He also said that what Ned described to him is a golden opportunity for me that should not be lost because of minor and reconcilable differences. I'll return to this. And he either told Ned or told me it was his opinion that Ned should not under any circumstances undertake any such interviews, least of all with Specter. It is his opinion that my judgement is correct and there should not under any circumstances be any, that anything any of these bastards have to say they can say after the book with their records is out. And he told me that he told Ned he has no serious difference with me on any of the content of the book and that he thinks it is a great and important one that should be out as soon as possible.

Now what Ned told Howard about our deal is entirely different that it either was to begin with or is as Ned has thus far amended it. He told Howard that in return for me letting him popularize it, he would pay the cost of printing the full work. He did not tell Howard that the initial condition was simultaneous publication of his condensation. This alone as I remember Howard's opinion would have caused him not to accept the deal. When I then told him that Ned had added the conditions of the interviews and the \$10,000 escrow advance as additional preconditions, and that this meant any publisher would have to be fairly certain of an incredible sale of 40,000 in hardback, Howard was, it seemed, quite taken aback. He discussed several things with Howard. One of the specific (and there were but few of them) items Ned mentioned is McClelland. Howard is in agreement with me and goes farther than I insisted with Ned, that it include reference to the testimony of the two confirming doctors (not including Stewart, Jenkins and another whose name I've forgotten. I think I have this with citations in the book. Howard said he would be writing Ned, and I asked him not to refer to anything I had told him. It is Howard's opinion that if Ned's are really altruistic intentions, he should first bring the complete work out as soon as possible and then have a condensation ready as soon as possible, but that one should not be keyed to the other. He has doubts about the intent of this precondition as, frankly, I have from the first. And he thinks it is quite wrong for anyone to superimpose his views on the work of another when he edits it without the concurrence of the author. This is the belief I expressed to Ned. There is more, but I think this is enough. It cost Howard money and time he does not have, so when he phoned me you know he was disturbed. It is after his call that I attempted to phone you. When you were not in, I phoned Jerry. He was upset by this and by another matter. Together they have compelled me to decide as I have, and in this I have Lil's volunteered encouragement, indeed, for her, insistence. And it is not new with her. It goes back to at least the time of that Lifton nastiness with you.

The Wecht business is out of hand. Cyril has sent Sylvia a copy of my letter to him.

His purpose, as I see it, can be nothing but mischief. He has not had time for months and months to xerox a couple of pages he promised on scientific tests, not had time to respond to any of the many letters reminding him of his promise, but he has had time to send this personal letter to Sylvia. She is, according to Jerry, quite upset by it. And from what he says it may well be that I was ill-advised to write it or to write it as I did. My recollection is unclear and there is now no useful purpose served by rereading 7 1/2 single-spaced pages. That is past and to the degree possible I shall be divorcing myself from all such things in the future.

Ned was quite rushed in getting to New York, but once he was there, with a lunch date and a board meeting, and he had to have been late to begin with because the weather reports we heard were that no plane could leave DC until almost an hour after his was scheduled, he found time for seeing Jerry and phoning Howard, each with rather full if not really accurate versions of what happened here. By the time he got there his attitude is that I had questioned his integrity. What I had done and I could not have been more explicit was to ask him to search deeply into his own motive so that at some later date he would not reflect and question his integrity himself. If I had had any doubt of his intentions, I'd have asked him to leave or would have broken off then and there. And as he said, if he had felt that I was questioning his integrity, he would have left immediately. But his confabulation has begun. I really think it is because he has come to the subconscious realization I have already indicated to you but has not and at least for a while will not permit it to be conscious. By that time his mind may have twisted it a bit more.

Perhaps the one single thing that angered me most, and the only thing that angered me, aside from Cyril sending a letter clearly not intended for that purpose to Sylvia, for it could not but anger and disturb her, is Jerry's concern that I will become separated from the help of the critical community. Help? What help? Jerry has the intention of helping me, but what he has done, what he is trying, can't have any benefit for me personally, as he understands. Howard is indeed helpful, as Paul is from time to time. You have been, in the past. And at that point, aside from some minor suggestions by Bernabei, who seems to have pretty much withdrawn from before the end of the last term, there has been none. It has all been the other way, and it has been of what for us is great cost in time and money. Nichols I don't have to tell you about, or Garrison. There is no point in going into the rest, for it doesn't make any difference if you know or don't. What you know of Calif ought to be more than enough. In money alone critics owe me over \$2,000, and here I am talking about cash I have spent for them on the never-kept promise of repayment. It has nothing to do with enormous demands on my time, or with unpaid-for books, as with Trent Gough, who has told others he had forgotten and would do it immediately (and this goes back to 1967) but since then, ask I learned from "il this morning, she has written him twice with no response. At our age, in our condition, with all we are into, we should have to do this? He is not the only one in this category among "friends" and critics, most of whom are not. Penn you know about. There are more. The CCIs, the Froep and I am confident others. I heard my end of both conversations, and she, too, was really outraged by the "help" to us part. She said to what what I would not, that broke as we are, the slight cost of feeding guests is a great strain on us. She has a stack of accumulated bill for which we have no money. Unless he has a few buck in her wallet we have as of this minute \$17.39. In such circumstance, as I think you can understand, the slight cost of groceries is considerable.

But of all the people who have visited us over the years, and they have been many, the only ones who have thought to repay are you, who did not do it this way but when you had a few bucks would send them, Paul, who sent us perhaps \$150-\$25, and not for the cost of his being here, which was really nothing, Howard's father, who always sends a small sum whenever Howard is here (and he is only a Sears salesman, so he can't be loaded), and Mary, who once sent me a gift of \$100 and after she cited us for a while, insisted, when I took her to the airport, where I had also met her, on pressing another \$100 on me. So, from here point of view and with the financial problems of simple housekeeping, she is uptight about this and particularly with those means, like Ned. Jerry always used to bring something, but I asked him not to. As you know, I regard all our younger friends as sort of children. I want Jerry to stop squandering his money, to start accumulating a reserve so he can do what he wants to. You know, sometimes people come here in pairs for as much as a week.

Anyway, it is getting close to mail time and I must end this. "y many things over the years I have taken deep offense. I am sufficient unhappy about having elected to be a pauper when I need not be, when I can be foreclosed at any moment (I am currently \$1,250 in arrears to the bank alone in paying the carrying charges of my debt). Even the small thinks rankle. But I will not again be humiliated by this, as I have been in the past except by the few young ones of you. I once told you what Vince did to me in N.C. Now Cyril on the one hand tells me that I am panhandling him, when I didn't had never did, him or anyone else (I've only once asked the return of my costs in getting stuff at the Archives for anyone, Jones Harris, and that cheap bastard took months, during which I had to write him often, and then returned only the actual cost of what I spent in the Archives, not the cost of going there and getting it). With you and Paul in the past, we have swapped back and forth, have repaid each other that way. But not one other has ever thought to repay even these costs. With some they have been slight, but for us, since long before you knew us, there has been no such thing as a slight cost. When you are broke, minor costs become major.

Edl also told me this morning that I was correct in detecting some sort of problem I believed Ned was reflecting. It may or not have been his own, as I still think. In a conversation with Edl, who has sent his wife some pennyroyal and asked whether she had liked it, when they got to talking about Rosemary's cooking Ned let it drop that sometimes she is so depressed they have only TV dinners. So, aside from all other considerations and there are others, I simply can't be part of anything that now or later can or can have the possibility of hurting Ned. I will be waiting to hear from him. He said he would write. I will then respond simply that I think the whole deal had better be off before it makes more problems for him and because the terms are unacceptable to me. I will also tell him that if he wants to bring the complete PM out in its present form, I will think it is great, that he can proceed as I had originally understood it, to condense and popularize the work and can get to publishers with it, but that it must reflect what I say and think, not what he now does. Incidentally, his original concept was so much the way I represent it that he asked me if he should have his name on it as editor. I told him absolutely, so it is not in concept the way he has now changed it. When he was here he said he had certain doubts. I told him this is neither the role of nor proper in an editor, but that I'd have no objection to including the standard disclaimer- and that I would take offense if he went a bit further, which would be to say he didn't believe my work. Nobody ever understands that an editor is saying what he thinks. It was at this juncture that Ned made the inde.icate reference to his money, asserting the right to compel me to change my conclusions and beliefs because he is, perhaps, putting up the money. I have no doubt he will not accept this, and it will then be over, and he'll have fewer problems. I suspect his wife at least is giving him some trouble. Besides, several thing he told me fill me without doubt about whether he has the ability to communicate with others to the degree of which he brags. He has no introduction planned to give the reader the knowledge required for understanding what follows. He says he had thought of something like that for an appendix. And when the second of his six chapters is on allocating fault, he has a basic misconception of what this book says and has altered what I want to say more than I will accept, unless the content does not fit the title. Nor is it in accord with current literary tastes to have a book of the projected length with such long chapters., (Maybe he needs it for other reasons, but I think he'd do well to get his concept of self under control.)

I will not change on this and I will not change my determination to try and divorce myself for almost everyone else. Whenx the word is getting around that everyone is helping me and it is baloney, when I am as humiliated as I have been by Cyril and Ned, both of whom are men of means, and as the others in similar condition, like Vince, Bud and Maggie, among others of the past have, I will no longer live in a way that makes this possible. Nor will I permit Edl to have that added, needless concern. I haven't yet decided whether to remind Ned again about that \$52.00. Unless I change my mind, as I may be forced to, I will not, and I don't want you to remind him.

In the time that in retrospect is total waste that I have spent trying to help others -and this has nothing to do with trying to prevent serious mistakes - I could have done the rough drafts of perhaps three books. That is a great cost. I haven't enough time left for this kind of what I must now regard as foolishness.

We have always had the question of simple survival. Now it is quite acute. When I spoke to me this a.m. about our overdue bills, not counting the bank, I asked her to total them and next week I'll have to arrange to borrow it. To put this to you in meaningful terms, she has an income of \$40.00 a month from a bookkeeping account. Our medical insurance alone is \$60.00 a month. Need I tell you of the other costs of the simplest life, aside from that of work? Somehow, we shall address this. Then I will spend my time working and writing letters as little as possible.

You clearly have not thought this thing through, and you will get quite a different version from me. I may or may not address this further if and after I hear from you. It is obvious that it is fairness to him that causes me to hold off on sending this, to write it while I am still too upset from his visit and what followed in its wake to trust myself to return to work. But there are a couple of to me touchstones in this. One is the original preconditions, which are not consistent with dedication to making fact available. Two is the ex parte alteration of these conditions to the point where it means permanent non-publication. Three is the very poor business sense reflected in his insistence that the unabridged work be suppressed until whenever he finishes the popularization which clearly now he no longer conceives of that (and I'd never have agreed to any other representation). The best chance is for the unabridged version to create commercial interest in the abridgement. So, while I have as of this moment no question about what Ned thinks is his real intent, I do have questions, serious questions, about that judgement of which he is so overweeningly proud, of his business sense, and of his literary understand, having to do with both the "popular" for of the "popularization" and the possibility of getting commercial interest. And I do have a question about his unrecognized, secret motives, I emphasize my belief that he is unaware of them, for what he is doing is locking me up with this work in perpetuity. That I will not tolerate, not for any price or reward. The end result may be that it may never be printed, but I will under no circumstances on my own volition be part of making that possible, and this is his minimum condition.

Instead of doing what he was supposed to be, preparing a condensation, he has been doing everything else. His completion date was day after tomorrow, and he has done but 35 pages. Meanwhile, I have been working long and hard on my end of it. And with all the other things I have had to do and the too-many of great personal importance I have had to let slide, I have taken the time to approach two of the more likely publishers for her, where I knew of the prejudice against me, so that it would not waste time for him. On his part, he has yet to set up the first appointment he told me he would undertake, after all this time, and has the effrontery and arrogance to tell me that he, not I, correctly understand the political, media and popular attitudes toward this subject and that it is in sense different from any other. He has not, by the way, had any word from Teddy's office, so so much for his effectiveness with his "establishment" connections.

There may be things I have not put well, there may be some I have forgotten, but I am done with explainings, done with worrying about others when I have too many of my own worries, and done with long letters trying to inform others. I have come to the point where I simply cannot permit any of these considerations to intrude into our lives and work. We will still welcome visits from those we cherish (and look forward to your coming), but for the most part it will be personal and have nothing to do with this work. I will be content to do my own, with such minor help as the few younger ones, the only ones doing anything of any meaning, provide. Those of the past, regardless of their fine work, are of the past. So far as I am concerned, they have abdicated any right to intrude into what is current, what those are doing for them. This is not criticism of you or Sylvia, for your lives require abdication of you. It is merely a statement that I will do my own thing, my own way, right or wrong, and in complete independence, to the degree I can. Best,